

Animal Care & Control



AD HOC TASK FORCE

OUTREACH & MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE

November 24, 2014 from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

The meeting was opened and Melissa Gable, the Public Information Officer, presented an overview of her role, resources and efforts. Realizing there is no marketing budget and this is a division of one, members asked the PIO for a list of items and resources that would be most beneficial for marketing / public relations.

Action Item: PIO to provide a list of items or resources that would best support outreach and adoption efforts.

The PIO stated that the website was updated approximately three months ago, but improvements are always needed. There was some discussion on whether there are a set of n County standards that may restrict the design. Valerie Beckett will inquire if there is an Office of Enterprise Technology initiative to impose a standards set of requirements.

Action Item: Determine if there are or will be standards to consider in a new design.

Pending RECOMMENDATION: Revitalize the website to a more retail oriented approach in order to increase visibility, adoptions, volunteerism, donations, etc.

Pending RECOMMENDATION: Develop an interactive Lost & Found database that is interconnected to other sites. Develop a way for someone to post a FOUND animal to this new site that has not necessarily been released to a shelter.

Melissa Gable stated that the Citizens For Pets portal has been posted on the Maricopa County website, the department's website as well as on the department's Facebook page.

A member suggested that more should be done to promote Pet Harbor. Another member stated that a one-sheet should be developed that contains all the links to check in the community as well as a Step-By-Step list of things you need to do if your pet is lost.

A member asked about the feasibility of a volunteer marketing department. Melissa explained volunteers have been utilized to assist with responding to Facebook posts and other activities. With the varying schedules, level of experience and ability, this was a challenge to ensure consistent messaging. She explained that a few volunteers internalized some of the negative posts, which can be problematic when sending a response on behalf of the department. Nevertheless, this is certainly still an option with the right volunteers.

Dr. Silva provided a presentation titled, “Community Services – Beyond Mandates”.

Action Item: Post the presentation to the portal for all members and interested public.

A member asked about “Brown Tags” for those animals that have been surrendered by their owner and are on a behavioral or medical hold. It was acknowledged that the animals could be ‘on hold’ for a variety of reasons / change in status. The member stated the concern is that these animals are not listed as available and end up staying in the shelter longer.

In responding to comments, Dr. Silva shared that in his view the real funnel is in the clinic. Approximately 18,000 surgeries were performed last year by 5 veterinarians. For example, it should be considered that if adoptions increase by 2,000, there will be at least a 10% increase in clinic volume. A member stated that everyone should work to find creative solutions to help with the shortage of resources, i.e., talk to vet schools or groomers, ask pharmacies to help, etc. Dr. Silva stated that there is a letter of agreement with Midwestern University that opens in 2015. He has also been in discussions with University of AZ which will open a school in 2017. Although it is a few years down the road before any of the students would be qualified to touch / treat a live animal, he wants to establish a strong relationship. Dr. Silva explained that even with additional assistance, there remains a space and capacity / equipment limit. For example, there are only 5 surgical tables and lesser experienced veterinarian staff take longer to perform the required surgical procedures.

The PIO shared that recently the department partnered with the Western Maricopa Education Center for grooming services.

Action Item: The letter of agreement with Midwestern and the information on the partnership with Western Maricopa Education to be posted / shared with committee members.

Dr. Silva spoke about the Uno Por Uno program, which provides services to lower income areas that also report the highest number of dog bites and dogs at large.

A member asked about using a chemical castration method (Zueterin(?)). Dr. Silva stated it is still relatively new and is unsure of its viability.

The Chair solicited input on solidifying the goals of the subcommittee. The following goals were outlined:

1. Promote adoptions

Community outreach

Consider more partnerships, i.e., PetSmart Charities Rescue Waggin' taking Chihuahuas to other communities that are clamoring to adopt this breed.

2. Stop Homelessness of Pets

3. Attract Volunteers & Fosters

4. Community Education & Outreach

Educate cities/towns (27 different jurisdictions) to the fact that this is a community problem.

Spread the "2-to-1" message on how spay & neuter reduces intake at the shelters.

Sell the benefits of tags and licensing.

Create a one-sheet with information on what to do if you see/suspect animal cruelty.

Help save staffing costs by recruiting more volunteers to handle shelter duties.

- Media blitz to recruit more volunteers
- Post needs of volunteer recruitment websites

5. Attract Donors – Both business and from individual donors

Glean email addresses from Chameleon and add those people to e-newsletter.

Create community resource/info sheets for pet owners and potential adopters.

Provide education pieces to the public (training your dog, etc.) – Develop a list of story ideas.

Have media blitz on the “Needs” of the shelter, then another to report on the results / outpouring of support.

Develop a frontline response or intervention program – Staff who can help assist people with exploring and understanding available option before surrendering a pet.

TNR/Spay/Neuter Education

ACTION ITEM: To have the volunteer coordinator present the program to the member and be available to respond to questions.

Next meeting scheduled for Wed., Dec. 10, 2014.

Next / Follow-up Action Items:

From the 11/12/2014 meeting:

- Provide media hits for the past 12-months – *Completed*
- To provide members with information on recent or current surveys and results – *Pending*
- Gather information from other organizations to consider what programs are working – review the statistics – *Pending*
- Provide a copy of the New Hope contract – *Completed*
- Provide information on the current marketing plan / program – *Completed*

From the 11/24/2014 meeting:

- Invite the Volunteer Coordinator to present and respond to question – *planned for 12/10/2014*
- PIO to create a list of items and resources that are needed – *Pending*
- Provide letter of agreement with Midwestern and with Western Maricopa Education – *Completed*
- Post Community Services – Beyond Mandates to the Citizens For Pets portal – *Completed*